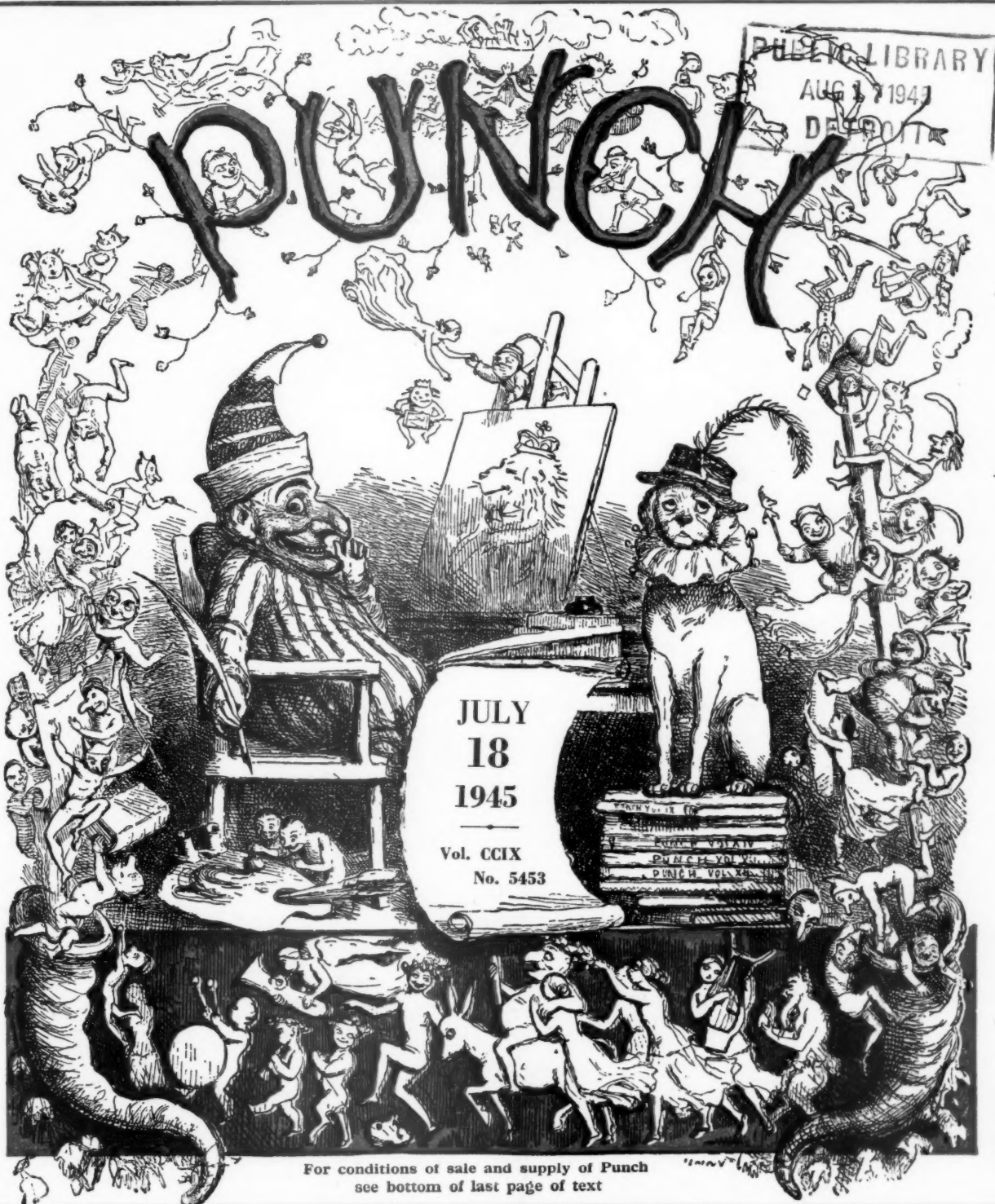


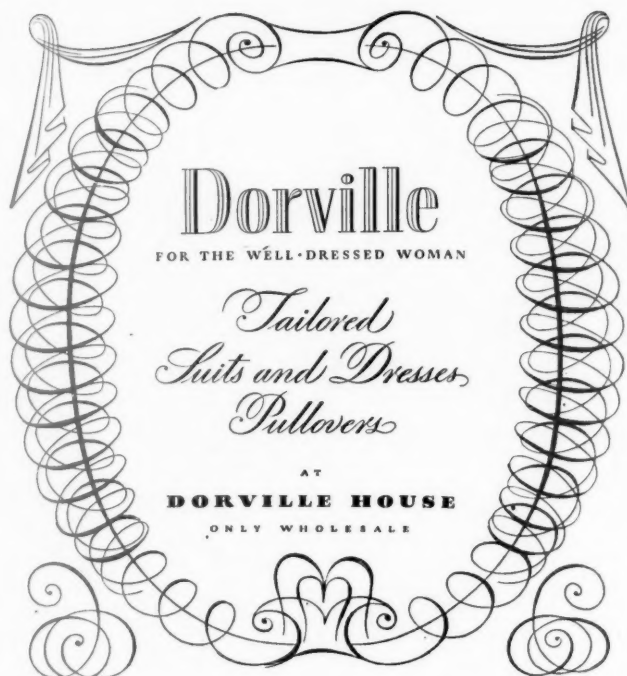
CADBURY *means Quality*



For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text

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Dorville
FOR THE WELL-DRESSED WOMAN

*Tailored
Suits and Dresses
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ONLY WHOLESALE

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GOOD THINGS come by two and two—

Lavender and lace,
Gin and Vermouth, ham and eggs,
Loveliness and grace,
Sage and onions, fun and games,
Bands and marching troops,
Port and walnuts, hearth and home,
SYMINGTON'S AND SOUPS.

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**THIS IS IDRIS
SPEAKING,
GIVING YOU
THE NEWS . . .**

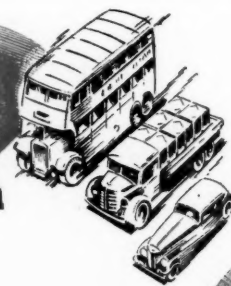
**SORRY . . .
UNTIL PEACE
RETURNS
THERE WILL BE
NO MORE—**

IDRIS
THE QUALITY SOFT DRINK

IDRIS LIMITED, LONDON, MAKERS OF QUALITY
TABLE WATERS THROUGH FIVE SUCCESSIVE REIGNS



**Wherever
wheels turn
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For Beauty
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BLUE ITALIAN

"We plan to resume the
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**Your Hair Brush
rebristled—**

I specialise in replacing bristles in
worn brushes. Forward your Ivory,
Silver or Ebony brushes, when quota-
tion will be sent by return of post.

JOHN HASSALL,
Brush and Mirror Manufacturer,
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**Healthy dogs
make good companions**



BOB MARTIN'S
Condition Powder Tablets
keep dogs fit

"... the years that
the locust hath eaten ..."

Since 1939 large numbers of our men and
women have been serving their country in
the Forces.

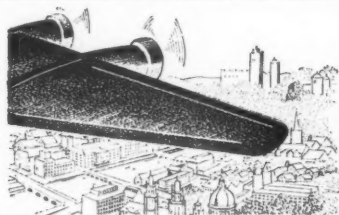
Soon many of them will be returning to their
homes, anxious to make a place for them-
selves in the life of a nation pursuing the
arts of peace.

Constructive help will be needed in solving
the many business problems that will confront
them after long absence from the ordinary
affairs of daily life.

The managers of the branches of the Midland
Bank have a wealth of experience and know-
ledge in such matters which they will gladly
place at the disposal of men and women—
whether customers of the Bank or not—upon
their return to civilian life.

MIDLAND BANK

LIMITED



**NEW
PLACES...**

The day will come when the lure of strange places
will give you no rest. And, remembering the
lost years, you will pack forthwith and go.

And the world, noting your distinctive Antler
Luggage, a thing of strength and beauty, will say:
"Here comes a traveller of
discernment."

Meantime... take
good care of your
Antler Luggage;
keep it polished
and ready... for
the day.



ANTLER

The World's Best Luggage

J. B. BROOKS & CO. LTD., BIRMINGHAM

trust
nothing
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Chilprufe

REGD for CHILDREN

is Pure Wool in its softest and most protective
form. Treated by a secret scientific process,
it is accepted by mothers, nurses and doctors
alike as the perfect underwear for children. So
delicate in texture that it will not irritate the
sensitive skin of a newly born babe, it will
stand repeated washing without shrinking or
losing its colour, shape and durability. At
present made only for Infants and young
Children.

Also CHILPRUFE Dresses, Rompers, Cardi-
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and Man-Tailored Coats for Children

CHILPRUFE LIMITED
Governing Director: JOHN A. BOLTON
LEICESTER

**CHILPRUFE IS PURE
WOOL MADE PERFECT**

LODGE PLUGS

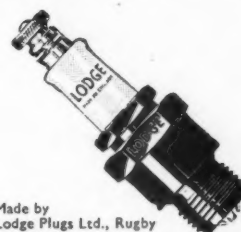
were used

in the
Rolls Royce engines
of

"ARIES"

on its flight
over the

NORTH POLE



Made by
Lodge Plugs Ltd., Rugby



KIA-ORA
looks
forward!

Kia-Ora fruit squashes were and will again be the world's best.

**BOTTLED
VINEGAR**
is best
for
pickling!



and this is the
**BEST BOTTLED
VINEGAR**



*"The Uppers have
kept in
wonderful
condition"*

"I notice, madam, you recognise good shoes when you see them, and you also know how to preserve them with a first-class polish."

"Well, I believe a good shoe—especially in these days—needs the best polish one can get. That is why I always use Solitaire."

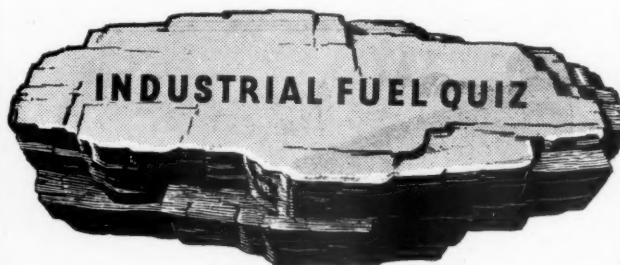
This De Luxe polish waterproofs, preserves, cleans and polishes in one operation all footwear, whatever the colour or texture of the leather. Also removes and prevents stains and dullness. In all fashionable shades.

**SOLITAIRE
SHOE POLISH**
De Luxe

Obtainable from all good stores, 1/- per bottle.

In case of difficulty write for name of nearest stockist to:—

FURMOTO CHEMICAL CO., 1-3, BRIXTON ROAD, LONDON, S.W.9



Q..Why should fuel economy and efficiency be one of the primary aims of industrialists in the post-war era?

A..For two reasons. If Britain is to maintain her industrial competitive power, production costs must be lowered. An important factor in achieving this end is by using fuel and power with the highest possible efficiency. Secondly, British industry is based on coal, and coal reserves are not unlimited.

Q..How can this be done?

A..By making the effective use of fuel a main consideration in the construction and layout of works, and the design and

operation of plant. By maintaining an enthusiastic fuel watching system, and by studying the Fuel Efficiency Bulletins.

Q..What are Fuel Efficiency Bulletins?

A..They are pamphlets written by experts and issued free by the Ministry of Fuel and Power. They enumerate in simple terms many hundreds of ways of saving fuel, and give comprehensive suggestions for improving and adapting plant.

Q..How can Fuel Efficiency Bulletins be obtained?

A..By applying to the Regional Offices of the Ministry of Fuel and Power.



ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF FUEL AND POWER

Defeat this enemy!

Diphtheria epidemics have followed the trail of battle all over Europe. But in Britain, thanks to scientific immunisation, great strides have been made in controlling this deadly disease. For every three children who died from diphtheria before the immunisation campaign started only one dies to-day. Yet four million children are still unprotected against this dangerous enemy. It is the duty of all parents to see that their children are properly safeguarded without more delay.

What do I do...?

I remember that diphtheria is most dangerous at ages under five; and that the best time for immunisation is just before the first birthday; but every child under 15 ought to be protected.

I ask at my children's school or at the local Council Offices or Welfare Centre for details of free immunisation, and arrange to have it done quickly.

Issued by the Ministry of Information
Space presented to the Nation by
the Brewers' Society



If you have any
VAPEX

please make it last. If carefully used, a little goes a long way. After use the stopper should be tightly closed to avoid evaporation. Production will be resumed as soon as conditions permit

VAPEX... for Colds

A Drop on your Handkerchief

THOMAS KERFOOT & CO. LTD.
Vale of Bardsley, Lancs., England

**To relieve
skin irritations**

The instant Cuticura brand Ointment touches the skin all itching and irritation stop. Its unrivalled antiseptic action instantly kills infectious germs and prevents blood poisoning. For swift, clean healing of eruptions, rashes and skin injuries Cuticura is unbeatable. *Of Chemists, 2/10 & 1/5*

Cuticura
OINTMENT

Do your teeth
complete your
charm?



the answer's on the
tip of your tongue

Use Pepsodent. Then feel with
your tongue how its super-
cleansing Irium has flushed
stain-collecting film away.

1/3 & 2/2. Also
made in powder
form



More
than a century's
untarnished reputation

Goddard's

the finest polish for
Silverware

FOR
RHEUMATISM
GOUT, LUMBAGO, SCIATICA

AND ALL RHEUMATIC ILLS

use **CURICONES**

OBTAINABLE FROM
ALL CHEMISTS

DOCTORS USE IT

CORNS
MOVE THEM
WITH

"Hobson's Choice"
CORN PLAISTERS
POWDERS

The Old-established remedy—3-7 days'
treatment. From Chemists, Stores, etc.
Plaisters 2d. Powders 1d.

NOW



—keep YOUR dog fit
the "professionally approved" way

Some of the world's most
famous breeders have used a
certain dog mixture exclu-
sively for nearly half-a-
century: because they have
proved there is nothing like
it—for purifying the blood
and toning up the system—
for making listless dogs
lively and keeping active dogs
healthy.

Now—in order that all dogs
may benefit—the manu-
facture and sale of this
mixture have been taken over
by the makers of Britain's
most famous dog-food.

So you can start to-day to
get—and keep—your dog in
the pink of condition by
putting him on this "pro-
fessionally approved" tonic.

'CHAPPIE' DOG MIXTURE
THE "PROFESSIONALLY APPROVED"

(Prepared according to
the famous original
Tinker formula.)

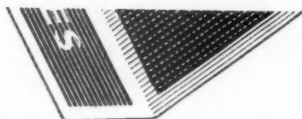
2/3 per bottle (inc. tax).
from CHEMISTS, PET STORES, CORN CHANDLERS

If you have any difficulty in obtaining supplies, write to Chappie Ltd., Slough, Bucks.



After duty —

15 MINUTES' PLEASURE AND
SATISFACTION WITH A
CHURCHMAN'S No. 1



CHURCHMAN'S No. 1 CIGARETTES, 10 for 1/3, 20 for 2/6
C.3614

Andrews for
INNER
CLEANLINESS
helps to keep
you fit



See how Andrews cleanses the entire
system:

FIRST... Andrews refreshes the mouth
and helps to clean the tongue.

NEXT... Andrews settles the stomach
and corrects acidity, the chief cause
of indigestion.

THEN... Andrews tones up the liver
and checks biliousness.

FINALLY for Inner Cleanliness,
Andrews gently clears the bowels,
relieves Constipation, and purifies
the blood.

For Inner Cleanliness be regular with your

ANDREWS

Family size tin 2/-

Guaranteed to contain 8 ozs.

(56-12)

Coming

THE RETURN OF
Vantella
SHIRTS
TO MATCH
"VAN HEUSEN"
COLLARS

Carters
INVALID FURNITURE



Owing to essential contracts the
range of invalid chairs and invalid
furniture is now limited, but we are
still in a position to supply certain
articles. Please give full particu-
lars of your needs and we will
endeavour to accommodate you.

GT. PORTLAND ST., LONDON, W.1.
Phone: Langham 1049.



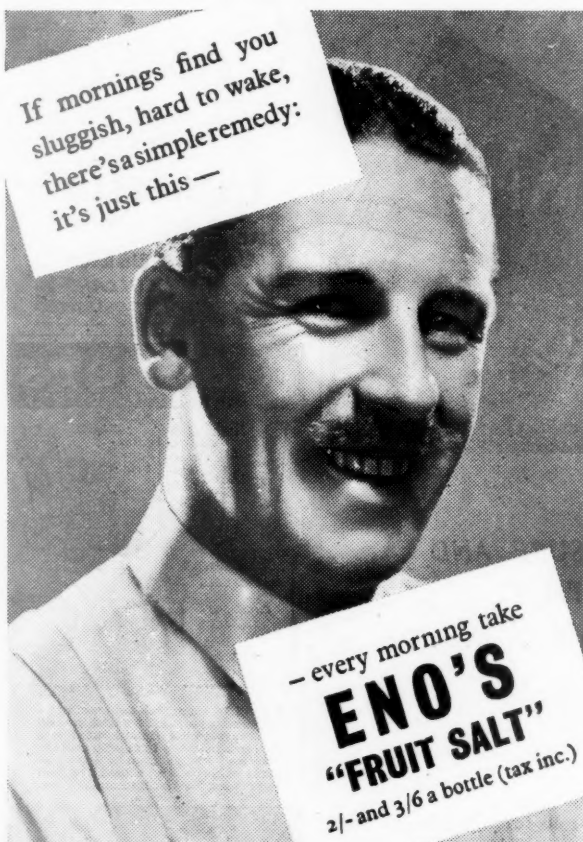
Steeling a march! Trust Gillette's fine-tempered edge to get through where the going's toughest. In Burma and the Far East, Gillette in battledress is smoothing the way — to that victory smile! Gillette in battledress, maybe — but Gillette true to form!

Gillette in battledress

"Standard" Gillette Blades (plain steel) 2d each, including Purchase Tax. Fit all Gillette razors, old or new.

If you can't always get them, remember they're worth trying for! Production still restricted.

If mornings find you sluggish, hard to wake, there's a simple remedy: it's just this —



— every morning take
ENO'S
"FRUIT SALT"
2/- and 3/6 a bottle (tax inc.)

WHERE THERE'S NEED —



THERE'S THE SALVATION ARMY!

Officers who have shared the trials of their countrymen in

Teams of Salvation Army workers from Great Britain specially trained to cope with the problems of relief work are battling against appalling conditions of hunger, disease and homelessness in Holland and other liberated countries.

They are being helped by hundreds of trained Salvation Army

occupied lands during the war years, and whose knowledge of language and local need is a valuable asset. More teams must be sent out.

£50,000 IS NEEDED QUICKLY.

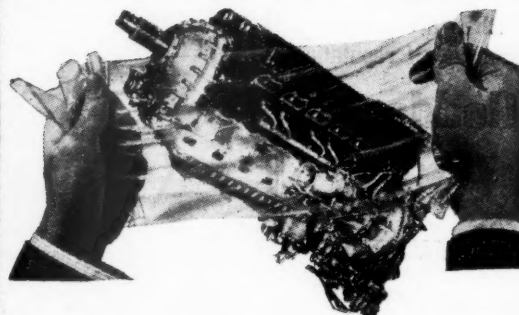
Please send your gift now—marking it "Relief Work" to

GENERAL CARPENTER,

101 Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4

Member society of the Council of British Societies for Relief Abroad.

38/140



It's in the bag....

The humid atmosphere experienced on ocean voyages corroded and spoiled a large percentage of machines and tools that had to be transhipped across the Seven Seas by the United Nations.

Then came Pliofilm. Enclosed in a huge heat-sealed bag of Pliofilm even entire aero engines were transported safely, arrived unspoiled, ready

for immediate installation.

This very considerable contribution to the Allied cause high-lights but one of the many packaging capabilities of this incredibly versatile new material. For Pliofilm will, in fact, wrap and protect almost anything. It will certainly solve your post-war packaging problem.

★ (Pliofilm, registered trade mark of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company)

Another contribution to progress

Pliofilm★ —by **GOODYEAR**



PUNCH

Or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCIX No. 5453

July 18 1945

Charivaria

A SUNDAY newspaper proclaims that lots of luxuries are again to be had. But are we?

An American who arrived in this country a few weeks ago says he would like to stop long enough to see the seasons round. Not realizing that in all probability he already has.



There is no doubt that writers of leading articles in the dailies have a definite influence on public opinion. Especially if they succeed in catching up with it.

A traveller mentions that many desert dwellers have never seen a fish. Without the help of the Ministry of Food, too.

Opera is to return to Covent Garden. It needn't worry. It won't get any tomatoes.

"Karachi which has the reputation of treating visiting sides in a hospital manner has been excluded from the proposed itinerary, rather unaccountably."—*Indian paper*.

None so blind . . .

The future of the exiled Polish Government is uncertain, although some members may go to Warsaw. It's much the same with the exiled British Government, but by the 26th they will know definitely who goes to Westminster.

The *Daily Express* has begun the publication of a thriller in serial form. It is scheduled to run longer than the Laski feuilleton.

"Unlicensed cars may be used to take electors to and from the voting stations on polling day, but, says the Ministry of War Transport."—*Sunday paper*.

Remember that—or else.

Swallows are reported from Sussex to be nesting in a tin can. Prefabricated houses for human beings have lids.

As many holiday camps are still requisitioned visitors to the seaside are forced to enjoy themselves on their own initiative.



Now that the electioneering fever is over politicians are gratefully preparing their return from the exhausting rush of all the things that are going to be done to the normal condition of not doing them.

The report from Germany that one of Hitler's oldest friends has just died shows that the Fuehrer did not remember *all* his old friends during his lifetime.

"Can you imagine a queue of people with something to sell?" asks a correspondent. Easily. Generals lined up at the office of a publisher with the MSS. of their war memoirs.



The Black Hand

"I WISH," I said quite simply, walking into the Yard, "to offer my services as a Detective Inspector of insoluble crimes."

They expressed astonishment.

"You have no technical qualifications," they said.

"I have one."

"Name it."

"I know every house in London."

They expressed astonishment again.

I modified my statement.

"Every queer house," I said. "Every house that has something badly wrong with it. Every house in which the body is likely to be found slumped forwards on a sofa in the lounge, and filled to the brim with cyanide of potassium, arsenic, digitalis and all the usual ingredients. I know those lounges well. They have no windows or doors. They are furnished quite simply with a wash-basin and an escritoire and a safe in the wall. There is a trap-door in the ceiling, and a ventilator in the parquet floor. The key of the trap-door is in the trouser-pocket of deceased. The ventilator is bolted. The house is lonely. Outside is a loggia.

"What happens when you are called in to investigate the crime? You are baffled. You post the organs to the Home Office. One of you thinks it is a case of suicide. Another suspects the heir of deceased, another the exasperated wife. Another suspects the loggia."

They listened spellbound.

"What time, what trouble it takes you," I went on, "to discover the trail of the assassin, to analyse his motives, to scrutinize the architecture, to tap the wainscoting, to examine the walls, the roof, the bricks, the plaster, the state of the plumbing, the clauses of the will. You notice that the attic has been built out in order to form a convenient garage. You are nonplussed. You observe that the dining-room has been flung into the conservatory, the kitchen hurled into the coal-cellar, the basement converted into a studio, and that the fire-escape leads into the sink. You scratch your heads. It may take you a month to discover the syringe in the central heating apparatus that sprays poison through a pipe in the handsome vestibule from the boiler in the telephone cupboard. You discover (but how gradually!) some twenty persons who have excellent reasons for wishing to make the body slump forwards in the lounge, and are only waiting till the corpse asks them in to tea. Each of them has a watertight and cast-iron alibi fitted with every modern convenience; each of them is an expert in the distillation of venomous herbs in his domestic offices, and each has been trained in youth as a civil engineer."

They raised their hands in protest.

"Don't mistake me," I went on. "I am not suggesting that this is the only kind of murder, or the only position in which the body may be slumped. Deceased may have been giving a dinner-party to the fifteen people who hated him most, and had the greatest desire to see him dead. That is a very common thing for deceased to do. But he will not of course be giving the dinner in his mahogany-panelled dining-room. Deaths don't happen in houses where deceased does a thing like that. He will be giving the dinner-party on the slopes of the well-tiled roof, only accessible by means of a spiral staircase from the delightful garden, or in the spacious billiard-room, only accessible by means of a subterranean passage from the commodious servants' hall. He will have slumped quite simply and suddenly backwards during the entrée, after eating nothing that was

not being eaten by everybody else, and drinking wine ordered from the British Restaurant next door and partaken of by the whole party, about whom there was nothing unusual, except that they all happened to have a large tin of strychnine concealed about their persons on that particular night.

"There have been cases too where the body has been found in the magnificent library, slumped sideways on an Oriental divan. I am the last to deny it. It was the habit of corpse to lock itself into the magnificent library alone for half an hour every evening and play gramophone records for the purpose of being murdered there. Why any corpse who has a magnificent library ever goes and locks itself alone into it I cannot imagine. I don't even know why it has a library. It never reads any books.

"But what a library it is! Completely detached from the house, surrounded by an almost impenetrable shrubbery, and used by the previous owner partly as a laboratory and partly as a potting-shed, and with an installation in one bay for forging banknotes, and in another for building model aeroplanes. A little thing like that surprises you. Everything surprises you. It doesn't surprise me. I know that lounge, that billiard-room, that library. I have tapped every panel, opened every cupboard, peeped into every cranny of every one of these houses long, long ago. I have been round them with the owners. I have had a surveyor to help me. I know exactly how a murder could be committed in all of them. I know why it was committed, and I know how to find out by whom it was done."

"Go on," they said. All those bullet-headed, shrewd-eyed investigators hung with rapt attention on my words.

"Don't bother about the way the corpse was slumped," I told them. "It had to slump anyway. Don't bother about the architecture. Come to me. And come to me if you want to know the motive. We have only to ask a few easy questions first. Was the mansion a freehold? What was the price? Was it a leasehold? How long was the lease? What was the premium? Was it a full repairing lease? Who was last on the estate agent's list for the house? Was he a patient man? Had he access to arsenic? Was he the sort of man capable of projecting arsenic by wireless into a magnificent library from a gas-stove in a kitchenette when homeless and mad with despair? Or of training mice to eat deceased's will, if deceased had made one? Find out the man who most urgently wanted a residential property, however undesirable it might be, and you have your murderer."

I left them slumped upside down in their chairs.

EVOE.

o o

Inlook

OUR outlook (planners tell me), changed by dint of battle, is more social than before.

Perhaps it is, but why not call it squint,

Since we're less greedy while expecting more?

o o

The Social Whirl

"Fashionable and Personal"

The Mayoress of — (Mrs. —) was bitten through the finger by a rat whilst attending to a hole in her chicken run on Friday.
Kent paper.



THE VICIOUS QUEUE



"Ten miles to Cairo, ladies—but to you, five miles."

Les Departures

YO HO! Heave-ho and other ultra-marine cries! Naval Party 20000 is under way and tomorrow the Château des Indes will ring no longer to the pop of the cork, the giggle of the Wren and other strictly nautical noises, the *pavé* streets of Pernod-les-Douches will no more echo to the love-call of the Leading Seaman, and Paris itself (herself?) will presumably relapse into the drabness induced by unrelieved khaki. We go to Germany, we go to control the Hun, we go to non-fraternize; we go, I am permitted to reveal, to Bad Sauerkraut, a convenient *central-punkt* some miles *einland*, unrelieved, if Corporal Duffle, Royal Marines, of the Advance Party is to be credited, by any amenity whatsoever, fraternizable or non. Strictly in accordance with naval tradition. In fact it is my belief that their lordships exercise the utmost ingenuity in rendering shore service so uncompromisingly bleak that our

gallant sailors opt for long years at sea with fervid alacrity, thus Ruling the Waves and so on. But I digress.

The move as originally planned was a diploma-work of simplicity and cunning. On A-3 Day all beds and bedding, personal gear and office tools were to depart by heavy lorry for the north. On A-2 an Advance Party was to be flown to Bad Sauerkraut where it would at once go to action stations, thereby providing continuity for our labours. On A-1 the caravans of the great ones would steam off in line ahead, and on A Day itself the staff would take wing to its new abode. Of all this drill the only part that fickle circumstance has allowed to function is the A-3 programme, whereby all useful aids to living and working have been firmly transported away from us. The Advance Party having fooled around on airfields for two days running waiting for a cold front to warm up or whatever it does, is still

amongst us. The sailing of the caravans, in some of which the owners had hopefully gone to bed for the duration of the voyage, has been postponed, to say the least of it, on account of their (the caravans) having been tied up in harbour for the last six months, which it is now disclosed has made them (still the caravans) allergic to activation. No one has had anything to sleep in or on or to work with or at for three days. It is on the whole lucky that the war in Europe is no longer strictly current.

The Advance Party, the Main Party, in fact the whole ship's company is at this moment becoming wheelborne and is departing to the airfield in one mass movement. As Staff Liaison Officer (Pongoes) I am not going with them, nor is DEPSLOP, my Deputy. He—Lieutenant Tackle—and I go to Wurstheim, the Pongo's Paradise, the Soldier's Summit, the last fine flower of Integration, where we are to continue our life-work of making the

Army intelligible to the simple sailor. We travel independently and our barouche is even now straining at the clutch; Marine Tickler, who will con it, is retrieving useful ironmongery from those cars whose drivers are waving au revoir to their Wren friends; we are, to coin a phrase, ready.

A phone call has just come through from the airfield to say that owing to 10/10ths something over the target they will not be driving any planes to-day. This, though thwarting, is a notable advance on basic air practice, which is to lure you to the aerodrome, weigh, catalogue, label and otherwise excite you, take you for a long ride in a sealed van over what Bomber Command or the Ninth Air Force did to the field under the last management, and then return you to stock with an invitation to resume play at 0400 next day. All the same, as Time is marching on, something must be done, and Chief of Staff has decreed that Operation Soreseat is to be put into effect. This means that the miscellany of car-flesh into which the boys and girls have been inserted will now, instead of going to the airfield, proceed the whole 300 highly liberated miles to Bad Sauerkraut. Air-lift, to coin just one more saying, is out.

There is a frenzied rush to loot the few cushions remaining in the ward-room, a great heaving on board of packets of "K" rations, one of America's recent and most widespread gifts to civilization, a *diminuendo* of despairing cries, and DEPSLOP and I face the forenoon gin alone. The Château des Indes resounds emptily to the tread of a sentry or two, and we reflect on the fairly obvious contrasts to be drawn from its future employment as a Lycée pour Jeunes Filles.

The telephone rings and a voice announces "Corporal of the Gangway, sir. Transport alongside, sir." I answer that I will come in about five minutes. "Aye, aye, sir. I'll tell him to lie off." Thus, with suitably nostalgic terminology, our spell in France comes to an end, and Tackle and I, carrying an anchor between us in case the brakes fail, proceed to the car. *Vorwärts!* as Nelson used to say.

o o

"IT'S ALWAYS A PLEASURE
to hand on something better than usual.
Here, for instance, is tip-top quality in
COLLAR - ATTACHED
WORKING SHORTS,
KHAKI OF NAVY."

Advt. in local paper.

We hand them on with pleasure.

News from Germany

MY DEAR MOTHER,—This business of non-fraternization is all very well but it can become remarkably complicated. Take the case of Veronica and Mrs. Mopp, for instance.

Veronica and Mrs. Mopp are the two women who looked after the Military Government mess in which I was staying. What their real names are is even now very doubtful, but Veronica has a thick belt of hair over her face most of the time and Mrs. Mopp has an instinct for cleaning the upper establishment at times which will cause the maximum of embarrassment to all concerned. I understood when I arrived that they were both Displaced Persons who had accepted the hospitality of the Occupying Power on its arrival and who were glad to render some service in return. It seemed an ideal arrangement, for Mrs. Mopp was a remarkable hand with the needle.

That was the situation until the Security Officer took a hand. Of course he may have been doing no more than his duty but when he told the Colonel that he had evidence that they were both German subjects and that he thought that it was his duty to remove them to a place where they would be under his close supervision it was thought to be more than a coincidence, in that, so far, his mess had failed to find any suitable females to look after their socks.

But the Colonel is not the kind of man to take such an attack lying down. I was detailed to clear up the question of the origins and nationality of both of them.

Veronica was not much of a problem. She came from some portion of the Baltic States that had been Lithuanian, then Polish and then German in quick succession, but since the Germans had at once put her in a concentration camp it was hard to argue that they had thereby given her the privilege of being a subject of the Greater Reich.

But Mrs. Mopp was more difficult. For one thing, she is older, vaguer, and has an impediment in her speech. She seemed to have started out in life as a subject of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, but that really got us nowhere. She had been born either a Slovak or a Slovene (it wasn't clear which, for reasons given above) and if she had remained at home and stayed single it would merely have meant a decision on whether she was a Czechoslovak, a Yugoslav, an Austrian, or a Hungarian, —a comparatively simple problem.

But that leaves out of account her marriages.

First she had married a Bulgarian engineer. To complicate it, he had died and she had then married a farmer from that part of Roumania which became Hungarian during the war. Nor was that the end. She hadn't cared for the farmer much and had left him and settled in Trieste, where, she claimed, there had been some sort of divorce proceedings; but how far the proceedings had got, in what court they had been started, who, in fact, was divorcing who, were immaterial details in her mind. If only, I thought, she could have married someone straightforward, like a Swiss.

When I mentioned the word "Trieste" to the Colonel he shuddered and said "That has torn it. We must refer Mrs. Mopp to Shaef."

Which did not meet the point of the Security Officer. As the Colonel said in the mess the evening of their discussion, "One can see his point. He'll wear out many pairs of socks before we get a ruling from Shaef."

I don't know what would have happened if the Admiral had not appeared. He drove up one afternoon with a phalanx of commanders, outriders and a very solid and efficient Chief Petty Officer and informed the Colonel that he was instructed to set up a headquarters and that he would be grateful for any assistance we could give. By fast work on the part of all the following day he was installed in a house worthy of the Senior Service.

I ought to have guessed what would happen when, on that first day, I saw the Chief Petty Officer exercising all the charms of the sea on Mrs. Mopp. Perhaps, as a former resident of a port, she ought to have known better, but she did not. The following day she packed up and left and was ultimately tracked down by the Security Officer in the new home of the Admiral.

The Admiral was not a man to bother much about the nuances of Central European nationality. "Where the White Ensign flies," he is reported to have said, "is British territory, and everyone under that flag is under my jurisdiction. I don't care if she married Hitler. She's on board my ship."

There was nothing in the Security Officer's text-book that gave him any guidance on that kind of situation.

There it is. I think Mrs. Mopp will stay where she is. In fact I am rather counting on it, for I have now managed to transfer myself to the Admiral's mess, or rather ward-room, and live under the White Ensign too. I liked Veronica, but my socks were in a dreadful state.

Your loving son HAROLD.

At the Pictures

THAT OLD FEELING

ONE's first thought, seeing *The Affairs of Susan* (Director: WILLIAM A. SEITER), is that the war is really over. Here are the kind of story, the atmosphere, the treatment—yes, and some of the people (e.g., GEORGE BRENT)—of the pre-war romantic farce. . . . The formula has come back from its holiday fatter (110 minutes) and rather more inclined to labour some points, but no less effective as "escapist" entertainment.

The story is of a girl and four men, each of whom sees a different side of her disposition—or rather, a different act. In a way the picture is reminiscent of the GINGER ROGERS film *Tom, Dick and Harry*; but perhaps we had better not start identifying echoes, for the piece is full of them (GINGER ROGERS, again, and GEORGE BRENT in *In Person*; IRENE DUNNE in *Theodora Goes Wild*; the star's sister, OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND, in several of her lighter pieces—odd how the family resemblance comes out much more noticeably than usual when the stories are in the same key). It doesn't seem to matter. Mr. BRENT plays a theatrical producer who, on holiday in Rhode Island, finds *Susan*, a girl of charming appearance but intimidating whimsicality who talks poetically about stars and voices and is therefore trained by him to play the part of Joan of Arc. She makes a big success, becomes a great dramatic actress, marries him, divorces him and adapts herself—this is the real theme of the film—successively to the utterly different tastes of three other men, each of whom afterwards is convinced that "his" *Susan* is the "real" one.

The reminiscences of each are told in flashback when she is about to marry the fourth. This is WALTER ABEL in an ungrateful part as a stuffed shirt who kisses her only on the forehead, so we know he won't get her; but which of the others gets her? Well, as in *Tom, Dick and Harry*, a little reflection would tell us that too.

It is a bright thing, a bit too long. The fact that it rests on that old and popular fallacy—the girl

becomes an actress because she "is" one part, but she stays an actress because, against all probability, she proves to be equally good in every other part—is unimportant in a story not meant to be taken seriously. As

fond of shaking her head while she speaks, as Mr. BRENT is a little too fond of the device known as the "double take," but perhaps the responsibility there is the director's. The other parts, big and small, are well done, and the dialogue is full of laughs.



(The Affairs of Susan)

MORE NON-FRAT.

Roger Berton GEORGE BRENT

a comedienne, Miss FONTAINE turns out to be extremely good; a little too



J.H.D.

(I'll Be Seeing You)

AGGRESSOR'S EGRESS

Mary GINGER ROGERS

the very slight, but betraying, conscious brightness of tone when, telling the soldier her life-story, she begins to make it up as she goes along; and similar clever trifles. JOSEPH COTTEN too makes a first-rate and most convincing job of the part of the soldier. A sentimental, improbable picture, but unexpectedly rewarding in detail. Almost the only false note is, I think, the flashback (illustrated here) showing the incident that sent the girl to prison. The improbability is inherent not in the circumstances of this incident, but in the fact that she was sent to prison as a result of it; there is thus no need to emphasize these details. I believe the point could have been made far more credible in words, leaving out the flashback scene which is not at all in key with the simple, pleasant domesticity of the rest of the film. R. M.

o o o

"Payment will not be less than £1 ls. per 1000 words; for really first-class articles this fee may be increased to £3 3s. per 1000 yards."

Journalists' publication.

May we write very big?

Economic Slang—a Glossary

DURING recent weeks the economists have been made a target for abuse from all sides. They have behaved magnificently under the strain. It would be difficult to surpass the drama of their demonstration of solidarity on the eve of polling day. The procession of economists that marched from Threadneedle Street via the Seven Stars, Ludgate Hill, Fleet Street and the Globe Tavern to County Hall made a truly impressive sight, with its banners bearing the words "We Can Take It" above the coat-of-arms of the International League of Pure Economists (the pound sterling on a field of clover quartered with an excess profit in a bed of roses).

As the procession moved majestically on its course it recruited hundreds of statisticians from the great crowds lining the streets. Dry eyes were few and far between on that never-to-be-forgotten Wednesday night. The Press barons of Fleet Street had been humbled.

What was all the fuss about? It was alleged, you will remember, that the economists were failing in their duty to the nation by withholding their advice to the electorate. They were accused of sitting on the fence from motives of self-interest. Serious charges, these. How much of truth did they contain?

First, let me repeat that I know the economists like the back of my hand. I am one of the few people that can read them like a book. Then, let me say that the picture of an economist sitting on a fence not knowing on which side his bread is buttered is quite nonsensical. In all my years with the dismal scientists I have never once, to my knowledge, seen one sitting on a fence. Sitting, yes—in a thousand and one interesting postures; and leaning, too. But always with a purpose. An economist will sit for hours, if necessary, with his eyelids batted down in thought. Or he will lean long and heavily if he has time on his side and one elbow free.

Why should the economist be expected to rush into the hurly-burly of political strife? How can he possibly know which programmes to condemn, which theories to explode, until they are supported by the people's mandate? An election provides the economist with his only chance of a real holiday. And he

Users of deck-chairs seem to fall mainly into two classes—



(a) Those who have started with them fixed too high up, and wish they had the energy to get up and put them lower down, and—



(b) those who have finally mustered up enough energy to get up and put them down, and now wish they had the energy to get up again and put them up higher once more.

knows better than to spend it sitting around on fences.

And so, no more of this mud-slinging, please—unless, of course, you would rather do without my glossary.

Post-War Credits. Most of the usual economic epithets, such as fictitious, concealed and intangible, can be applied to these assets. In the absence of precise news about them the general feeling of the market is sceptical and bearish. I advise caution and a rather noble form of pessimism.

Advances to Customers. This is a term that appears with monotonous regularity in the accounts of banking institutions. It seems to be completely without foundation.

Overheads. (See *Oncosts*; no connection with a high and stable level of employment.)

Rack Rent. This is the rent—slightly less than extortionate—of a property to be let in the open market.

The tenant bears the rates and the landlord makes notes of any repairs that are needed.

Surrender Value. Some insured persons who fall behind with their payments commit hara-kiri. Those who surrender live to fight another day but are left without a policy until another insurance company hears about it.

Gross Profits. A derogatory term used by certain politicians to define the difference between buying price and selling price. Very gross profits are achieved, it seems, by bloated capitalists. HOD.

“Your correspondent, Mr. Gerald Williams, speaks approvingly of the man who can put 600 to 700 facing bricks in cement mortar, strike joints as he goes on, and leave the work to be admired.”

Reader's letter in “Daily Telegraph.”
Ostentatious brute!



"We went in from the nursery end at 100 feet and observer reported that they were 78 for 4."

Man's Ingratitude

IT is really most awfully kind of the Fentons to lend us their house. "Treat it exactly as if it was your own," Fenton said when he rang us up. "The key's next door. Oh, and if you wouldn't mind giving the dog and the kittens their food . . ."

"Of course," we said.

"The hens have their stuff twice a day. There's a sort of mash in a bin. You just mix it with water and spoon it out."

"Hens?" we said.

"Yes, if you wouldn't mind. You must use their eggs, naturally."

"Oh, no."

"Yes, yes."

"No, no."

"Certainly you must. We shall be most offended if you don't."

"Well," we said, "it's most awfully kind of you."

This really is a most awfully nice house. Bright, clean, comfortable, easy to run, good modern furniture with an electric cooker and a refrigerator and all that sort of thing, a well-stocked garden and only a short walk to the sea. Only shortish anyway. The kittens are dears, playing together all day long in the most engaging way, and the dog, though getting on of course, is a companionable old thing.

We are looking forward to a good supply of eggs, as there are ten hens here. With only two of us in the house,

it looks like an egg each for breakfast and a boiled one each for tea. I must say I do like a boiled egg—brown and four and a quarter minutes—for tea. Perhaps two eggs each for breakfast, if the birds are in form. We shall see.

* * * * *

This is quite the most enjoyable holiday I have ever spent. One is so utterly carefree. Taking one's meals when one feels like it, pushing off down to the beach at all hours, lying out in the garden with a book, a cool drink and a packet of cigarettes—idyllic in fact.

It's odd that we can't find the bread board. Not that it matters two hoots; one can cut bread as easily on a plate as on a board, or nearly so. Still, it's odd where it can have got to.

Nothing so far from the hens, but we shall probably get eight or nine to-morrow to make up for it. Perhaps even a straight flush. The mash they eat smells horrible, but they eat it all right. In fact they go at it like mad things.

The kittens are all over the place and seem quite tireless.

* * * * *

Where on earth are the kitchen scales? Surely the only sensible place to keep them is on the dresser, or in the cupboard under the dresser, if you prefer it. But the kitchen here is too modern to have a dresser, so the scales might be anywhere—though they don't seem to be, as a matter of fact. Of course it's only a small thing, and we shall rub along all right without them, but it is rather a bore hunting all over the house for something that would be perfectly easy to find if it was kept in its proper place. We were a bit tired, I dare say, after the long drag up from the beach, and not quite in the mood for scrambling about fruitlessly in endless cupboards.

We found the bread board at last, in one of the sideboard drawers of all places. We should never have found it at all if we hadn't been searching high and low for an egg-spoon—not that there are any eggs yet, but one must have something smaller than a teaspoon to take mustard with. People who keep their bread board in the sideboard might easily think the linen-cupboard the ideal place for kitchen scales. I had a look there, in case. Nothing doing.

* * * * *

How the Fentons can stand the doors in this house is more than we can fathom. Twenty times a day we shut the dining-room door and every time it swings slowly open as soon as your back is turned. It needs a new catch or something. The kitchen door isn't much better, unless you press it right home each time, and the one from the sitting-room into the garden is the end. The hinges have dropped so badly that it takes a battering-ram to open it, and when you have got it open you can't get it shut again without going outside and pushing, which means walking right round to the front door to get in again. It may seem ungenerous to criticize, and of course we shouldn't dream of mentioning this business of the doors to the Fentons after they have so very kindly lent us the house and everything, but one would have thought for their own sakes they would have had a simple thing like that put right.

Still, if they can put up with the kittens they can put up with anything.

* * * * *

I am absolutely fed to the teeth with these hens. All the feathers have come off their necks, and the sight of these scrawny brutes gobbling their loathsome mash is almost more than one can bear. They think of nothing but food. This morning they all set up a great cry, and we rushed out with a basket supposing that they had at



last decided to declare some sort of dividend. Seeing us, they all dashed forward, elbowing each other out of the way in the obvious expectation of another meal (though they had been fed less than an hour before), and then had the dashed impertinence, when they found there was nothing doing, to make angry growling sort of noises as if they had been deliberately deceived. And there wasn't an egg to be seen. I would wring their necks if I could bring myself to lay a hand on them.

Somebody broke into the house to-day while we were away on what will, I hope, be our last interminable trek to the beach. They left a note, presumably for the Fentons, saying "Sorry we missed you. Helped ourselves to a drink or two and had a boiled egg each. Thanks." It was signed "Jack and Dorothy."

Of course if the Fentons choose to have some pretty odd friends, that's their affair. After all this isn't our house—there'd be some pretty big changes if it was, I don't mind saying—and it's really awfully kind of the Fentons to lend it to us. Nor are we mean enough, I hope, to grudge this Jack and Dorothy one or two goes at our precious hoard of gin, not to mention wolfing the only two eggs the hens have produced in a week. But it did upset me a little to find the note held in place by a half-pound weight of the kind supplied with kitchen scales. Where on earth?

Our last morning. Trod on one of the kittens while carrying a piece of Royal Worcester. Piled the bits on the hall table and on top of that left a short note scissored out of the one left for us the day before. It read, "Sorry, Jack and Dorothy."

H. F. E.

Seats

WELL, well, well! Here are the dear old faces coming back to the dear old places again. Now isn't that fun?

Everyone, yes, my dear, everyone is in London. Of course, it was an awful bore but they simply could *not* get here before; although they tried and tried, they were tied to the country houses they leased at such vast cost, and they felt oh, so miserable and lost away from their darling city.

So we *must* have pity, and let them have all the theatre seats, and cinema seats, and restaurant seats, and taxi seats (poor sweets!).

After all, *we* had the fun of seeing London burn, and now it's *their* turn.

V. G.

"And now for the singer who sings literally from her heart."
Radio compère.
Only one stage higher than a ventriloquist!

"At Penmaenmawr, Professor Daniel said the primary concern of Welsh workers was to be given work in their own country, and he calculated that at least eight of the employable population of Wales would need new jobs after the war."—*Manchester paper*.
Quite a problem, isn't it?



"Gee, why over in England . . ."



"There's not the slightest need to see me again, Mr. Parkhurst, but remember—no more of those absurd delusions about being a kleptomaniac."

Dakota Over Germany

W EIGHT, Religion and Next-
of-Kin—
All completed? Then please
step in.

Paper bags on the rack in rear.

That was Brussels . . .

. . . the Rhine is near,
Grey and gelid and lacking shine.

Surely, never—is that the Rhine?

Somehow or other it looks—well,
dull!

Here, in this unconditioned hull,
Boredom rides, as the Island Race
Sit in suffering, face to face.
Nothing to read, to tease the brain. . .
Let's twist round and look out
again.

Wood and river and cratered heath,
Scourrying westward underneath.

What's that chequer of mound and
trough?

Only a town with the top blown
off.

What's that thing like a half-squashed
midge?

Only a Fort which hit the ridge.
(Notice, now that we've crossed the
Rhine,

Railway metals no longer shine.)

Whose are those castles ringed with
moats?

Who are those louts in sailing boats—
Sprigs of the Almanach de Gotha,
Paddling, playing Hiawatha?

Time for someone to crack the whip!
Look at that piebald landing-strip—
Never patched with the same cement,
Half a mile of it, eloquent.

Craters, falling in well-spaced rows,
Filled-in craters, where feebly grows
Grain, like hair on a pock-marked hide;
Rain-filled craters with beasts beside.
Always craters . . . how bored I am!
Wake me up when we're over Hamm.

Hamm? We passed it an hour ago.
No, there's nothing to see below,
Only the toy-like unrealities,
Old palatinates, principalities,
Lately joined in a cosmic blunder,
Conqueror's carpet rolling under,
Only the Reich in full eclipse,
Only the last apocalypse.
Bored we sit, in a dull unease,
Watching a colonel knifing cheese,
Watching a Waaf (too blonde by half)
Stopping a ladder on her calf.



RED SKY AT MORNING



"On the Kitchen Front this morning we have an absolutely fascinating recipe for toad-in-the-hole."

Design for To-morrow

IT was certainly many years since I had seen such a dated room. There had been a time, I had to admit, when I might myself have chosen the lampshades of inscribed parchment or the cigarette box scooped out of a leather-bound volume of Thomson's *Seasons*. I hoped I would, even at an early date of furnishing experience, have eschewed the row of brass things from horses' foreheads which were strung over the mantelpiece, and the warming-pan balancing the copper cauldron on either side of the restored inglenook. I too, I was afraid, would have had the beams laboriously revealed, and I might have had the oak stripped.

An arrow case did service for an umbrella stand, and the pewter tankards had been daintily filled with marigolds. Two ancient wine bottles had been converted into candlesticks. Even at the height of the vogue I doubted if I would have disembowelled a bureau to insert a radiogram.

We had, I reckoned, come on. Or at least fashion had changed, and to the stylish the new is the beautiful. In the up-to-date flat inkstands were inkstands, and if requiring an ash-tray one was seldom handed a hunting-horn. Our flatlets were simple and for use. If we craved for a little decoration we hung up an honest-to-goodness picture of an amputated hand and a globule lying together with a broken statue on a seashore already profusely strewn with monster shells.

The reaction would come of course. The Neo-Baroque in an orgy of plastics. Our rooms would insidiously fill up again. Voluptuous sideboards of the Victorians and flippant Edwardian screens would once more have their day until, faked once too often, they would sink to the slick store on their way to the tawdry sales-room. Then the new-fangled wallpapers would be peeled from the walls to reveal to the archaeologist the original distemper in cream and off-white. The ornate furniture of the early two thousands would do quite well for a daughter starting on her own in a room in Oakley Street or a son in lodgings

in North Oxford, and the beautiful simplicity of the square oatmeal-coloured sofa picked up in reasonable condition in that nice little antique shop in King's Road would replace the curves and patterns of the day, and the exquisite steel tubing of yesteryear oust the ornate nylon furniture which had swept the country. Utility china, alas so briefly in circulation and so roughly handled by the generation who did their own washing-up, would be eagerly acquired by brides of the era.

The quaint electric bulbs, a clumsy device before the days of universal flood-lighting, would be sought after by collectors, and the pretty white fuel from old-world gas fires be cleverly used by decorators in ingenious ways. The bonnets of motor-cars would grace many a billiard room and those amusing rubber hot-water bottles, sink baskets, double saucepans and mincing machines diversify the walls.

Trophies of war are perennially displayed in halls; pikes, lances and matchlocks furnish many a passage. A couple of V2s would look natty, one each side of the front gate.

Post Offices

I WANT to begin this article by saying that the most notable feature about a post office is the humorous publicity it has collected by not selling postal orders in the stamp section, not selling stamps in the postal order section, and so on. For any institution to have built itself up into a joke simply by carrying on quietly in the way it always meant to be, when you think it out, just what you would expect from a public which has from the beginnings of history packed its marmalade jars sideways in its shoes and been struck dumb by the result. Though in fairness to the public I should say that people asking for stamps in the postal order section are not always as silly as they seem. Sometimes they have not read the writing over that bit of the counter, because they know it will depress them by being wrong.

Not all post offices of course have their counters divided into sections. A great many post offices are no more than a space cleared at one end of the village shop, and these have notable features of their own; such as that pleasant mixture of officialdom with bullseyes, and the very faint lack of confidence felt by non-resident customers in asking for anything more complicated than the weighing of a small squashy parcel. This lack of confidence would be much less faint, psychologists tell us, without the strong wire netting with which even the tiniest post office sees fit to ward off the outside world. Another thing psychologists have noticed about this wire netting is that people are inclined to talk under or over rather than through it. For once psychologists make no psychological inferences from this fact; they just think it is rather nice.

Village post offices also have splintery wooden floors, outworks of biscuit-tins, muffled acoustics and a number of very striking notices about the sort of things they are interested in. Because these notices show up against the bullseyes the public is interested too. What interests it most is the date at the bottom. Psychologists infer a lot from the fact that the public enjoys working out where it was living and whether it was in fair spirits on the day a dog-licence was printed. They infer that the public is as foolishly egotistical and on the whole harmless as ever.

Between the post office in the village shop and the slap-up all-out post office comes another kind which I must say something about. This is the kind which is mainly post office and subsidiarily a stationer's, and what I want to say is that it has a window with pencils and bottles of paste in it. That is the attitude of a post office to its window. When it has to rely entirely on itself it covers its windows with notices, clocks, letter-boxes and stamp-machines. The effect is definite but nebulous; I mean, I should like to know how many of my readers could draw the outside of a post office from memory, especially if they cannot draw anyhow. On the other hand it is very efficient, because people arriving at a post office after it is shut have a better chance of getting served from the outside than they do with most shops.

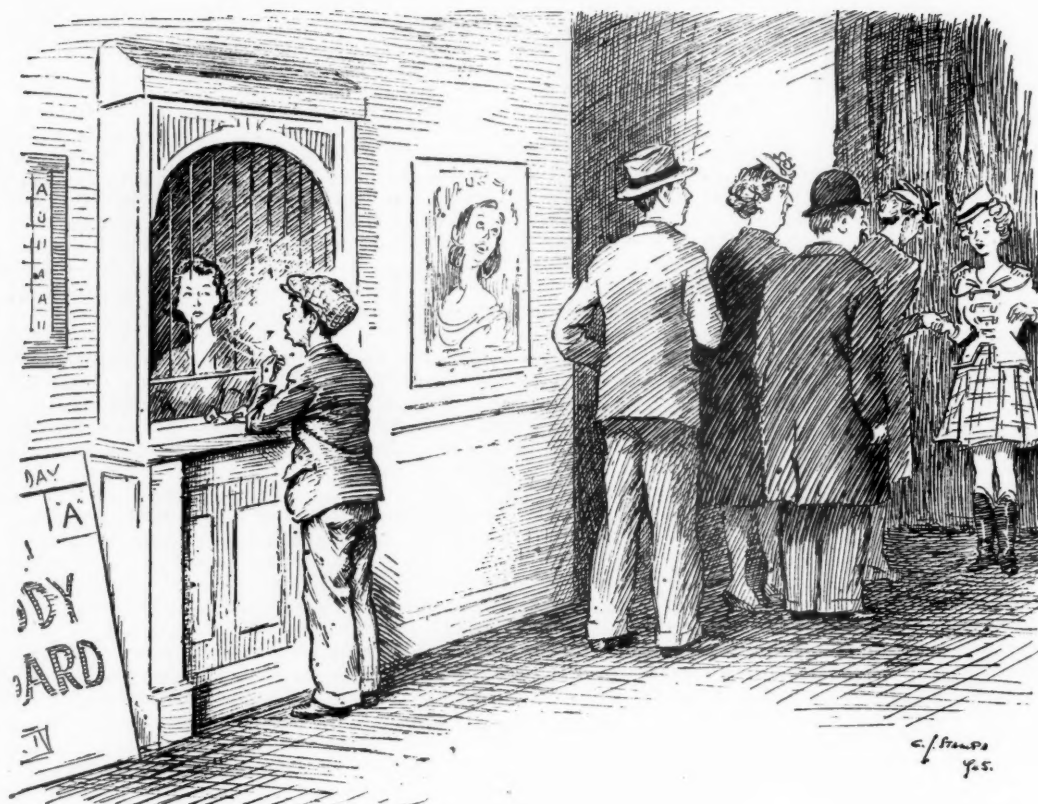
The inside of a slap-up post office is impressive. On one side is the counter, again defended with wire netting and this time divided into all possible sections. Most sections deal with different things, but stamps are apt to occur more than once in the wording overhead, and no doubt this is why the public thinks it can buy a stamp at any section. On the whole you can buy a stamp wherever there is a stamp album on the counter, but there is a close season at

certain unstated times of the day. At the end of the counter nearest the door there is a rather exclusive bit for money transactions, and at the far end the wire netting stops and there is an open stretch of counter where the public can hand its parcels in and get them handed back so that it can hand them in again further down over the wire netting. This does not always happen; sometimes the public hands them over the wire netting first and is directed along to the open bit of counter afterwards. Sometimes, again, the public gets it right first time and fairly glows with co-operation.

Along the other side of the post office is another counter, this time for the use of the public, and a number of telephone boxes which are no different from any other telephone boxes, their main feature being that they have telephone numbers just like real telephones, to encourage them, and customers inside who seem to the customers waiting outside to be a lot of garrulous fatheads. The counter for the use of the public has blotting paper, ink and pens at intervals. The pens are on chains—I do not need to say why—and the intervals between the pens are greater than the intervals between the chains, but the public is so well prepared for this that it is quite happy to see just one pen there and to sidle near enough to disconcert the customer who seems to be using it to write a novel. Never, say psychologists, is the essential strength of the long slow process of civilization, together with its essential phoniness, shown better than here. I need not describe the process; all that matters is that the person wanting the pen gets it quicker than either side had really meant.

Much has been written about post office pens, and I do not want to depress my readers by going over it again. I do, though, want to say something about pens in general. A pen is made with two prongs. When one prong comes off the pen is no good. But when both prongs come off there is some chance of making it write somehow; so we can never really say that a pen is finished. I think that if people thought this over there would be less bad feeling between post office and public; and anyway an awful lot of post office pens write like anything when other people are using them.

That is all I have to say about the set-up of a post office, except to mention the postmen who make an occasional appearance and strike the public as quite extraordinarily out of place, and the letter-box on the inside of the front which no one quite knows whether to trust or not. I must end with a few words about the public itself. The public, or the stamp-buying public, is divided sharply into two categories: those who buy stamps in sheets—that is, by putting down four pounds ten and challenging the post office to translate it into three different kinds of stamp—and the single-stampers waiting meekly with their three-penny bits. It is not so much the injustice of the universe that waiting single-stampers feel, as its justice; for they are telling themselves that this is the day of the week or the time of the day for that sort of thing, and that they have only themselves, by which I mean other people, to blame. As for the telegram-writing public at the counter opposite, this is not so much divided as united by sidelong glances which are only partly explained by that irresistible yearning to read something someone else is writing; they are also an expression of that sympathy which draws together two people trying to think of something to say in twelve words.



"What you mean, not old enough! I pay income-tax, don't I?"

"Taking Felt"

THAT is what they call it now—"taking felt." The poor old bowler has lost even its proud symbolic significance. What they say when they wish to put it the other way, as in "General A has been bowler-hatted", we do not know.

Well, here we are again, at the formidable entrance to Royal Naval Barracks, —. It is just five years since we entered last, serving (C.D.) but in "civvies", to be "kitted-up". Not many men, we imagine, have approached these portals with much enthusiasm: for no naval barracks is designed for a rest-cure, and few citizens realize what sailors suffer ashore. Even now, when at last we are to begin the reverse process and have come there to be "de-kitted-up", "civvied-down", "released", "demobilized", "re-allocated", or "discharged", we are not without proper

sinkage, a due sensation of inferiority and awe. The barracks are stuffed with sailors, insanitary with sailors—fifteen thousand and more. Talk about "queues" in civilian life! It is like a bee-hive or an ant-heap, the greatest queue-centres in Nature.

We are glad that we have not come here to reside, have not been here six or seven months like some of them, have not just arrived for the first time, like others. Some of them are drawing "white suits" and muttering things about Japan. These make us feel a little small. For though we are nearly fifty-five, the doctor has passed us out as practically A1: and we have come here not for white suits but a felt hat.

But many of them are carting hammocks and bedding about in neat but vast unwieldy sausages. Others are humping an enormous kit-bag—or both. A1 or not, we no longer feel

keen about that. It is quite time that Age and Service Group Number 1 stopped that sort of thing. We remember vividly how one rating tottered away five years ago, with his great burden of kit—the boots, the suits, the oilskins, the greatcoat, the blankets and overalls and gas-mask and all. To-day, where are they all? Some of them worn out, some of them overboard in heavy weather. The blankets were destroyed by a bomb; Stoker Stan had the overalls. Of all that lavish outfit, all that we have brought back to the dear old State is a respirator, slightly shop-soiled. And here we are, asking the State for a new suit.

We must say the dear old State is doing this job very well. With so many thousands of sailors to be sent to Japan and elsewhere it is pleasing to find so much care and attention

devoted to those who merely want to "take felt" and get out. We can assure all future felt-takers that the operation is comparatively painless. Everything has been well thought out.

At first, it is true, there is a rather alarming emphasis on the "joining routine". Fearful that somehow we have got on to the wrong conveyer belt we remark that we have not come here to join the ship, but to leave the Navy. It is explained, however, that before you can leave the Navy you must join the ship. This means a medical—X-ray—show the teeth—clothing stores—gas-school—pay-documents, etc. A great many cards are stamped and we give our name, number and address a good many times. All goes, so far, with smoothness and goodwill; but we are still in the IN-tray, so to speak, still on the wrong end of the conveyer belt, and now and then a bugle call, a stentorian order through the loud-speakers reminds us awfully where we are. So many thousands of sailors—so many thousands of cards—how easy it must be to make a mistake! At any moment we feel we may hear that brazen voice announce—PETTY OFFICER HADDOCK REPORT FOR DRAFT!—PETTY OFFICER HADDOCK FALL IN FOR JAPAN! We now observe with disquiet that the main card on which we are being conveyed is marked "For possible discharge." "Possible"? There you are! And we have another bad moment when a genial Chief Petty Officer says, "Have you drawn your whites?"

Even this, however, is not a mistake, but a jest. Indeed, it is a wonder how the Navy manages to keep all its scattered sailors separate—each on his own little string. We were once privileged to be "shown the works" at the great Patrol Service Base at Lowestoft (improved during the war) from which the strings lead to many tens of thousands of sailors, in small ships all over the globe. Ask any question concerning any one of them—what ship is he in?—his badges?—his medals?—his crimes?—his next-of-kin?—his examinations?—is he "temperance" or "grog"? and from one box or another out will come the card with all you want to know. The mistakes are few.

Well, at last, a rather thrilling thing happens. We find that our conveyer belt is diverging from the main stream. Those young sailors have to go through the gas-chamber. But we, who have done that once or twice, need only hand in our respirator and bid it a not very fond farewell. Now we are bound for the dispersal centre. Much to be

done still—but we are in the OUT-tray. Hooray!

What is more, we have the OUT-tray to ourselves. For the main crowd of Age and Service Group I has been through already, while we were writing Addresses or addressing envelopes. This afternoon there is only one sausage in the machine, the machine that last week was handling hundreds, and has so many thousands still to come. They tell us proudly that if there had been hundreds to-day this sausage would still have moved almost as swiftly. We can believe that, for all has been well and imaginatively contrived. We even detect a subtle change in the atmosphere on this part of the belt—a kind of end-of-term warmth and friendliness. Not that we have ever had anything to complain about at this great barracks (we remember how kindly we were "kitted-up"); but somehow, suddenly, we feel much less naval. The courteous officers and charming Wrens, no doubt, are longing enviously to step on to the conveyer belt themselves; but they do not show it. Down in one of the famous tunnels where they spent so many weary nights in the blitz we get our exit envelope, which before we are out will be filled with safeguards for our future life. We leave the tunnel a little sadly, rather guiltily, wishing we could smuggle out a few Wrens and ratings (and even Paymasters) with us.

Next come even more exciting things—ninety clothing coupons—a railway warrant to the end of the world (if we wish)—ration card for fourteen days—documents about our health insurance and employment—a surprising lot of back-pay—and fifty-six days' leave! All this still, however, in the austere surroundings of a naval barracks. Then, suddenly, by a fine stroke of imagination we are led to the Place of the Civvy Suit. This is still in the barracks, but like nothing else in the barracks. Rooms tastefully painted in cream and green. Large lists of the civvy clothing to which we are "entitled". Shop-windows with examples of the civvy garments which we can get: and good stuff too. A polite gentleman (in civvies), eager to measure us, to show us his goods, to hear our choice, to fit and please us in the good old way. This raincoat or that? A suit—or sports coat and grey flannel trousers? What colour coat? We are still in uniform; but already we have almost forgotten it. We are back in the land of freedom—of choice.

After the suit the shoes—brown or black: the shirt, the tie to match the

coat; the braces (if you are a seaman and wear no braces in uniform); the hat,—and the studs and links. Put them on now, if you like, or two ratings will neatly "parcel" them. We must hurry now—for a bus is waiting for us!

No, we won't put on our fine sports coat now. We will have one more journey in uniform. Truth to tell, at this high moment, so much desired by so many, with the Order for Discharge in our hand and our envelope bursting with the letters of liberty, we find that we are almost sorry to be leaving the Navy, the Navy that for five years has fed and fathered us. Out there in the cold world we shall have to find our own food, make up our own minds. However, let's face it. Good-bye, sir—and thank you. A. P. H.

Four-Wheeler

"A DOUBLE-GENTS' TANDEM, 2-speed gear, dynamo lighting."

Advt. in local paper.

Phew!

"CONTRIBUTIONS.—Air to the value of £500,000,000 will be furnished to the liberated peoples and the Far East."

Liverpool paper.



"By the way, dear, did anything come of all that election fuss we had a fortnight ago?"

At the Play

GRAND GUIGNOL: SECOND PROGRAMME
(GRANVILLE)

THOSE men of the Grand Guignol who seek to petrify us in our stalls know that the operation calls for speed. "Twere well, they say, it were done quickly. No time here to weigh and measure, to experiment with the carefully-pinned adjective, the modelled description. An author must make for the firing-squad or the rope at full tilt—after the use of the Guignol, in straight-flung words and few. A play of this breed may be dizzying nonsense in print; but if it manages to fix us during its course, if we have to consider it with blood chilled, then the author has triumphed and no amount of withering analysis after the ball is over can harm him.

The Granville, now Waltham Green's combined chamber of horrors and hall of mirrors, has found a second rich damp medley, with a score-sheet of one hanging-cum-shooting, two throttlings, one heart-failure, one death among the hounds (off stage), and one clamping in clay (reported). The last oddity is from an old piece, *The Medium*—revised, it is true, but still to be written off as nonsense with no compensating shock. We are to suppose that a sculptor, having killed his wife, has plastered up the body in the base of an ornamental column. There it stays until his mistress (who is more than the "medium medium" of revue) slips into a trance before an inquisitive doctor, mutters the whole story, and sets doctor chipping at the column—an all-too-papery shell—while sculptor foams at the mouth. The curtain falls to our unkind laughter. (This is releasing because the evening has little deliberate comedy.)

A new piece, charmingly named *Nark the Knocker*, is as able as *The Medium* is crude. Mr. HERBERT DE HAMEL relies upon suspense in a country cottage. ("Odds tremors!" as Mr. Acres of Clod Hall remarked.) First we are told what alarms to expect; then, while the girl on the

stage is in a quiver of fear—Miss ANNE FIRTH expresses this strongly—all happens according to plan. For a minute or two, no more, we seem to listen to the tap of Blind Pew's stick. Once the incident has ended we can begin to carve it, but for all its faults—the ways of its free-lance journalist are eccentric in the extreme—we have to admit that the scalp prickles. Miss EDITH SHARPE brings her usual authority to the journalist.

A second new play, Mr. FREDERICK WITNEY's *Coral Strand*, is a half-and-

of exultations and agonies in an Alpine hunting-lodge, and of the Count who heaves his wife's lover through a window to the grisly pack outside. Here, indeed, night's black agents to their preys do rouse. The piece, with the horrid no-escape quality of an evil dream, is helped by the clamour of the hounds. Mr. ROBSON grimly takes the Count—though we can imagine a more frightening performance—the nervous apprehension of Miss POLLOCK and Mr. GORDON EDWARDS is everything that it should be, and it is good when we pass from the theatre, cream-faced loons all, to find only an amiable July evening in Waltham Green.

J. C. T.

"NO ROOM AT THE INN"
(EMBASSY)

This play is a sharp cry of anger. Miss JOAN TEMPLE, thinking of the evacuated children of war-time, lets drive at callous foster-mothers and at officials who ineffectively "do their best." It is all blazingly sincere. Though the tale of *Mrs. Voray*—a "safe area" landlady—and her demoralized charges is, we hope, exceptional, it becomes in the theatre a strong piece of special pleading. Such a story as this, so vigorously told, must always stir our indignation and pity.

Its scene is hag-ridden. *Mrs. Voray*, loose-living slut, cheap Circe, is Miss TEMPLE's study in scarlet: Miss FREDA JACKSON, ever an attacking actress, hurtles at the part finely; we feel something of the fear the woman creates in the children left to her devices. Her death at the

hands of a pair of them is hardly plausible, but it is an accidental act of retribution that the author must have relished. Certainly the audience does. After an evening with the repellent creature, few of us will protest at the deep damnation of her taking off. Two of the children, the gentle and—to put it mildly—the frolic (presented, we feel, at many Juvenile Courts), are well played by Miss MARY KIMBER and Miss JOAN DOWLING. This is not light diversion. It is about as soothing to watch as *The Silver Mask* is to read; but Miss TEMPLE, an urgent writer, is able both to hold our attention and to make her case.

J. C. T.



INSET: Savage Hounds heard off

"WHY NOT? THEY'RE MY OWN HOUNDS."

Catherine MISS ELLEN POLLOCK
The Count MR. EDWARD V. ROBSON
Louis Morel MR. GORDON EDWARDS

half affair, hardly comparable to the author's searing *Coals of Fire*. Although the latest piece has a few brisk moments for Mr. RICHARD GOOLDEN as a mate, toughly insolent, the climax—in spite of rope and revolver—fails to alarm: we need more burnish on the bodywork. *Private Room Number Six*, a revision of the old Little Theatre anecdote of drunken general (Mr. EDWARD V. ROBSON) and lady with the long white gloves (Miss ELLEN POLLOCK), remains a lurid and uncomplicated shocker, but the programme keeps its shrewdest stab until the last. *The Kill* is Miss POLLOCK's refurbishing of the French play, that tall story

AN Officer in charge of a Com-forts Depot to whom we have been able to send supplies of our wool writes:

"In a letter it is difficult for me adequately to express my gratitude for the valuable help you give us, thus enabling further supplies of knitted comforts to be dispatched to the soldiers overseas.

"I wish I were in the position to be able to thank personally all the supporters of your Fund, for I am most grateful for this aid to our work."

We also tender our thanks to all Subscribers, and in doing so beg them to continue their most valuable help by sending donations which will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Mr. Punch at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940



Mrs. Pocock's Butter

THE one bright spot in our five and a half years of rationing was the arrival of Mrs. Pocock's butter.

It came with Bossoms' usual weekly order, done up in a neat two-ounce packet and labelled plainly "Mrs. Pocock." No sugar, marg. or preserves—just butter.

William, who was a warden, stretcher-bearer and a member of the anti-gas squad, and therefore very high-principled, was for returning it at once, but Sylvia, worldly-wise, restrained him.

For a week it lay untouched on the larder shelf.

"You can give that butter back to Bossoms," William suggested the following Tuesday. Sylvia was out of earshot—deliberately. Also deliberately we were out when Bossoms came. I think Sylvia hoped they would leave Mrs. Pocock's other rations, but they didn't. Just butter as before. This time a mood of utter recklessness took hold of us and we ate it. And so it went on, week after week.

Somehow this little two-ounce legacy assumed great significance. We anticipated it with a thrill never experienced in connection with our legal rations.

"Oh, NO, mother! At LEAST ten more degrees to starboard."

"Shall I bring our butter, or Mrs. Pocock's?" the children would ask, or "Do you think we might have some of Mrs. Pocock's butter to-day, just for a treat?"

Sometimes we even thought this particular butter tasted better than our own.

Now and again we speculated on Mrs. Pocock. William said she was probably an inoffensive old lady being sadly undernourished, but Sylvia convinced us all that she was a terrific personality gorging at the best hotels and giving Bossoms hell. . . . Occasionally we wondered whether our grocer, out of kindness of heart, had created Mrs. Pocock for our special benefit. In this case, fumed Sylvia, it was

absurd for Bossoms to expect us to go on feeding Mrs. Pocock without her bacon, eggs, sugar and marmalade, and the next time she was in the shop she would ask for them.

Then suddenly, without warning, it stopped! No butter, no bill, no explanation.

What had happened to Mrs. Pocock? We felt really concerned. William took the view that she had died of starvation in some miserable attic, but Sylvia consoled us by insisting that she had probably been drafted to Cairo with a lot of big pots, and anyhow she was not the sort of woman to go short of anything.

Rationing has never been the same since.



"My friends tell me there's an actionable representation of me in one of your novels."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

William Sewell

THE character of William Sewell, as it gradually emerges from *A Forgotten Genius: Sewell of St. Columba's and Radley* (FABER, 15/-), will probably not inspire in many readers the enthusiasm Mr. LIONEL JAMES feels for it. According to Mr. JAMES, Sewell was a hardly less important figure in the Oxford Movement than Newman, Pusey and Keble, and to be ranked with Arnold and Thring as one of the three men responsible for the transformation which the public school system underwent in the middle half of the nineteenth century. Why, then, should Sewell's name, as Mr. JAMES puts it, "in a quite unaccountable way have passed out of memory"? He appears, on the evidence collected by Mr. JAMES, whose industry exceeds his insight, to have been unable to reconcile his practice with his ideals. Highly emotional, and very eloquent, he preached that the true Christian must accept pain as "the first constituent of human happiness." In conformity with this view, he arranged that the masters at the two public schools which he founded, St. Columba's in Ireland, and Radley, near Oxford, should receive very small salaries. But he was only an occasional visitor at St. Columba's, the masters of which were enjoined to fast publicly, as an encouragement to their pupils; and shortly after the great famine of 1846 broke out he severed his connection with the school. This step, Mr. JAMES says, was much misrepresented at the time and has never been quite clearly explained. In view of his own manner of life, when he became Warden of Radley, it is perhaps not too uncharitable to assume that he did not wish to make any further experiments in a country where at any moment abstention from self-indulgence might become a matter not

of choice but of necessity. During his eight years at Radley he had, in his own words, "a French cook and a French *patissier* at my command." His income as Warden was only £250 a year, but his expenses were very heavy. "Domus must be at the cost of it," as he once put it, and among the items charged to Domus were plate, pictures, "handsome appointments for house and chapel," and the entertainment of important guests from the outside world. His liabilities having reached the sum of £40,000, one of the parents, "a clear-headed financier, and strong Churchman," came to the rescue. How far he made it a condition of reorganizing the school finances that Sewell should cease to be Warden is, Mr. JAMES says, not certain. All that is certain is that Sewell left Radley. An interesting character, well worth a shorter study written with greater detachment.

H. K.

The Engine at the Door

Wars seem to be made by those who do not trouble to do right, under the compulsion of those who do not scruple to do wrong. There are plenty of both in *The Last Days* (HEFFER, 9/6), a novel which, set in a modest East Anglian village during the eight months preceding September 1939, gives Mr. HUGH L'ANSON FAUSSET ample room and verge enough to account for the sorry character of our times. "We're like the rabbits that have been lurking in the shrinking squares of uncut corn," says the curate-hero on the announcement of war; but though Anthony is as innocent as a bunny, he has not, until the last half-year, noticed any particular discrepancy between the claims of God and Mammon. Now, however, stocktaking is in the air. Dr. Redfern the ex-don—a good portrait—has to die, comforted by *De Senectute*; his daughter Elizabeth has to cope with Anthony's indifference and her stepmother Natalie's charms; and Natalie has to face her passion for a corduroyed sculptor, whose loathing for big business is only matched by his tolerance for his own lusts. The book's craftsmanship is sound and sensitive; and it is only to be expected that the quantity of dirty linen produced far exceeds the writer's resources in soap and water.

H. P. E.

The Soldier's Muse

It is a noteworthy, though not, upon reflection, a surprising fact, that the men of the fighting services who seek self-expression in verse seldom seem drawn to the tormented rhythms and stark savage metaphors in which so many ultra-modern poets appear to find a natural vehicle for the thoughts of a troubled and perplexed generation. The fighting man, whatever his ordeals, is at least free of perplexities while his duty is plain before him; and as for the ugliness and hardship which are inseparable from his daily life, he prefers to find escape from them in memories of gentler and kindlier things. Hence it is not surprising that so often, like Colonel BERNARD FERGUSSON in *Lowland Soldier* (COLLINS, 5/-), he draws his inspiration from thoughts of the country folk of his native Lowlands, of days with rod and gun, of yachting "by Corsewall Point and Pladda And Cumbrae and the Cloch," as well as of a bird heard singing before Tobruk, of the lost comrade, of the thrill and pride of battle. Colonel FERGUSSON writes often in the Doric beloved of Mrs. Violet Jacob, of whose delicate gift his work is at times a little reminiscent; but it is seldom that a mere Southerner cannot follow him, even without the aid of the glossary he has thoughtfully provided. Two or three at least of these poems—notably, perhaps, "Sunday Morning, Tobruk," "Heritage," and "Return to Burma"—should find a place in any anthology of the work of soldier poets in the present struggle.

C. F. S.

Joseph at the Food Office

It is a little hard on the Almighty—who does not, as a rule, answer us back in this life—to be treated to the sort of persiflage with which Herr THOMAS MANN opens the last volume of his latest tetralogy. The Teutonic genius is apt to gambol ponderously where its Gallic equivalent would caper; and while Anatole France, one feels, would have made an amusing if irreverent circus-turn out of *Joseph the Provider* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 15/-), Herr MANN's approach suggests the pulverizing innuendo of the schoolmaster. This is particularly true of his prelude, in which the Eternal Father, bored, and tempted by Satan, produces man—to the annoyance and scorn of the seraphim. The translator says that the angels "sniggered," which seems to be the reaction aimed at by much of the book. But it is difficult to snigger for any appreciable part of four hundred pages. Luckily the Potiphar episode is over when we start; and Joseph speedily emerges as the diviner of Pharaoh's dreams—the power behind the ration-book. The climax of his history is not the discomfiture of his brethren but his initial engagement by Pharaoh and Pharaoh's practical mother—an episode as memorable for its finesse as for its sumptuous archaeological setting.

H. P. E.

Lord Samuel

In his late teens, Lord SAMUEL tells us in his *Memoirs* (THE CRESSET PRESS, 21/-), he was much moved, while canvassing for an elder brother, by the poverty of the East End. "May it be well led, our English revolution!" he exclaimed, in a denunciation of the wealthy classes scribbled on a piece of paper which he recently came across among some old papers. His revolutionary phase, which was brief, provides the liveliest pages in his autobiography, and one first-rate remark, made by a friend—"The poor who are always with us—but with whom we never are." Precluded from entering the family bank, in which his two eldest brothers, as well as two uncles and four cousins, were actual or prospective partners, he went to Oxford, where he took first-class honours in history, and then applied himself, on an amply sufficient private income, to politics. A quiet lucid record of a useful and distinguished career, the rhythm of which has never been disturbed by spectacular triumphs or reverses, these memoirs are certain of a place among the authorities which the historians of our age will have to consult. Particularly valuable is his account of his experiences in Palestine as High Commissioner; and he has much of interest to say about the fall of Asquith in 1916, and about the formation of the National Government in 1931. But as a portrait of a human being, his memoirs are less satisfying. An eye on possible hecklers, demanding an explanation of this or that expression of opinion, is necessary in a politician when he puts pen to paper, but not conducive to that unembarrassed mood in which illuminating autobiographies are written. H. K.

Bird Over Scotland

To say that in *Scotland* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 3/6) Mr. IAN FINLAY has taken a bird's-eye view of his subject is not quite enough. The bird is hovering very high, it sees a wide stretch of country, objects at the edge of its field of vision are, naturally, not so clear as those just beneath it, and another bird, wing to wing with it, might perhaps identify some of them quite differently. That is to say that Mr. FINLAY in so small a book has, naturally, little space in which to examine any arguments against his own views, and so many readers will be in

violent, if enjoyable, disagreement with him; and that the stress he lays on any particular incident in history or reading of national character is not inevitably one with which even all Scots would agree. It must be acknowledged, however, that the hundred and thirty pages of this book form a somewhat remarkable achievement, for there are few developments of the last eleven hundred years in history, religion, art, literature, education, commerce, agriculture, fishery, of which he has not contrived to give a précis. Humour this book does not boast, except perhaps unconsciously, as when, speaking of the sternness of parental rule in the Lowland families, he says "It may be significant that in Scotland boys are often kept in short trousers to a much later age than is the case in England."

B. E. S.

One-Man Anthology

Since *Back Words and Forewords* (CAPE, 10/6), which is described as An Author's Year-Book, contains extracts from books written by Mr. LAURENCE HOUSMAN from 1893-1945, it can only be considered as the top-skimming of the top cream, even though there were "only sixty-five" (his own description) volumes plus a half-share in *Prunella* to skim from. Seven of these are still out of print, so we may be grateful to the publishers for making such use of their paper allocation. In the Preface Mr. HOUSMAN says that when he began writing his whole bent lay in the direction (except for one short breakaway in *Gods and Their Makers*) of fancy, fairy-tale and legend, and refers to his "later libertarianism in matters religious, social and political." Now it should, since this anthology is arranged chronologically, be easy enough for the reader to spot the changing development, but the fact is that the fancy is so streaked by satire, and a good deal of the satire so overlaid by fancy that one only notices increasing subtlety in both. The book is a book for all moods, and would be a better bedside one than most.

B. E. B.



"I'm SURE that's the woman we let go to the front of the queue LAST week too."



"Getting damn niggardly with their peas—fourteen yesterday, twelve to-day."

If This Should Meet the Eye . . .

THIS morning, in the surging mob at Baker Street, a man in a brown overcoat said to me with breathless diffidence, "Isn't it Bolsom?"

"Isn't what?" I said.

"Your name."

"Oh," I said; and I heard myself add scathingly, "No, sir; I do not rejoice in the name of Bolsom." Then I pressed past him, apologies and all, and ran down the steps to Platform Five.

But the matter was not so easily dismissed from my mind. "No, sir; I do not rejoice in the name . . ." The phrase rang through my head. It had been a churlish answer. "No, sir; I do not rejoice . . ." It was not like me to have been so unkind.

Yet, I tried to excuse myself, could I have said anything else? "I'm

afraid not," or, "I'm sorry, no," would have implied, most falsely, regret at not being Bolsom. I might have said a mere "No," with a half-smile. I need not have conveyed that contempt, that distaste for all Bolsoms and all friends of all Bolsoms. I need not have wounded the man in the brown overcoat . . .

"No, sir; I do not rejoice in the name of Parkinson."

Parkinson! I stopped on my way up the escalator, and a soldier with a sharp suitcase ran into my back. Who was Parkinson, what was he, to creep in suddenly like this? What was Parkinson to me, or me to Parkinson? The ghostly Bolsom was bad enough, but Parkinson was worse; because I could see Parkinson.

He was a thin-faced man with

glasses, and his pointed nose had the pink tip of the dyspeptic. About him was the smell of salt and fish, and he was standing in the bows of a heavy old sailing-boat, his back to the sea. His good but unstylish macintosh was whitening here and there with the drying spray.

It had been at Whitby—how many years ago?—twenty-five at least; and I had never given the man a conscious thought from that day to this. Parkinson. He had denied being Parkinson, rudely and emphatically, but I thought of him as Parkinson all the same.

My father, a gentle person, diffident about approaching strangers even to seek the gift of a match, had been a little restless, I remember, ever since we had put out for our trip round the

bay. Even my immature powers of observation, mainly directed though they were to the spectacle of so much sea and to the changing shades of the passengers' complexions, had noted this. He had been eyeing the man in the bows; we could not have been fifty yards out to sea when he began edging his way towards him along the boat's starboard side. The man in the bows took no notice. My father moved stealthily on, throwing increasingly frequent glances for'ard, stopping now and then for purely token glances at the water in our immediate vicinity, scarcely regarding my shrill injunctions to study the curious behaviour of this lady or that gentleman.

I cannot be certain, looking back, whether I knew my father well enough at the time to be aware of what he was feeling; I had only known him for eight years or so; but I am quite confident about it now. He saw pure romance in the strange chance that a so-thought past acquaintance, out of all the teeming millions of the world, should be journeying with him. Here, at sea in an open boat, with the wind lashing at his raincoat and the merciless ocean holding all our lives in fee, my father saw himself in a class with those bold adventurers whose perils he had shared so often in the pages of *Masterman Ready*, *From Powder-Monkey to Admiral*, and *Mr. Midshipman Easy*. Who knew what fateful buffetings lay ahead for us all? The presence in the same frail craft of someone he knew, or thought he knew, touched the situation with its last brilliant highlight of glamour. It was, my father reflected, a small and richly romantic world.

He had reached the side of the man in the bows. He hemmed a little, moistened his lips, gathered his courage. He darted a glance or two to ensure that he was not making a terrible and embarrassing mistake, stared challengingly at me as I clambered joyously amongst the fish and the bilge, the mops and pails and sea-boots. Then, with an air of breeziness, a false show of hearty geniality which he imagined, I now realize, to be the proper equipment for an unconventional approach of this kind, he cupped a hand to his mouth and bawled:

"Aren't you Mr. Parkinson?"

And then the whole pinnacled dream was shattered.

"No, sir; I do not rejoice in the name of Parkinson."

Oh! it was cruel. I felt it, the cruelty of it, but only as something unpleasant which I did not really understand. My father's gentle face

paled under the rebuff, and seemed to withdraw into the concealment of his incongruously swashbuckling waterproof hat; he shrank into his raincoat as he turned and made his way amidships.

The sun no longer shone for my father, nor did the wind sing nor the gulls soar. Romance was dead. The adventure was over. As soon as we were ashore he took me by the hand and hurried me off to the station, where we caught an earlier train than had been planned, and got home to find my mother still at a sewing-meeting, no fire, and the table not even laid for tea.

I have never been to Whitby since, and have never, from that day to this, given a single thought to the man who was not Parkinson. Now, I suddenly want to know why he was so rude, so cruel. I have been sitting in the office wondering about him.

Was he Parkinson after all? He did not really say that he was not—merely that he did not rejoice in the name; there are some names in which one cannot rejoice, such as Glubwell or Ticketshaw. But I cannot think that he meant to be taken too literally. He began, did he not, by firmly stating, "No, sir"? Was he a wanted man, perhaps, seeking to conceal himself in improbable surroundings, and furious that destiny should have thrown him into the arms of an old acquaintance? Did he just take a dislike to my father's appearance? Did he just want to be alone with a sorrow? Or was he repelled by the imminent possibility of being adopted as an uncle by a strange eight-years-old boy who smelt strongly of fish and bilge?

Only one other solution occurs to me. Sometime in his childhood he had been out somewhere with his father, a kindly, diffident man, who, happening to see a face he thought he knew, plucked up his courage and said to it "Aren't you Mr. Plushcobble?"—whereat the face had replied with ineffable contempt, "No, sir; I do not rejoice . . ." etcetera. And the boy who, all those years later, became the man who was not Parkinson, unwittingly registered the fiendish riposte in his subconscious. There, up to the moment when my own father made his disastrous inquiry in the fishing-boat, it had been lurking, biding its time . . . Just as, in my own subconscious, until this very morning . . .

Great heavens! The man in the brown overcoat! I must go to Baker Street without fail to-morrow morning, and every morning henceforward, until I find him again; for I remember

now, with a stab, that he had at his heels a pale boy of about eight years, who regarded me only half comprehendingly when my subconscious put those vile words into my mouth . . .

Meet me at Baker Street, wronged and wounded stranger, and let the boy be with you, so that his little subconscious may be purged by my abject retraction! I will be Bolsom, I will be Plushcobble, I will even be Parkinson, but spare me the guilt of adding, down the generations, to the sum of the world's heartbreak! J. B. B.

The Memoirs of Mipsie

By Blanche Addle of Eigg

XXII—Mélisande

BRIEF though it was, Mipsie's experience in trade as "Millicent" served only to inspire her further. This time she decided that a dressmaking business would give more scope to her genius. "What is a hat?" she said, whilst discussing the matter with me, "A few flowers or feathers, worth twenty guineas at the most. But a lovely gown has no limit, either in imagination or price."

Once again the right premises were her chief difficulty, for she had only the £14,000 she had made out of the sale of her hat shop, since when relations had been somewhat strained between her and her son-in-law, Sir Basil Warpe (he had some absurd idea that she should have repaid him his original capital), so she felt it would be unwise, or worse still, useless, to approach him for more funds. However, money has never really worried my lighthearted sister. "Where there's a bill there's a way," she often says laughingly. The right place must be found and the money for it would somehow follow.

We were in deserted Chine House—the Brisketts' London home—one day, going through some drawers of family lace which she thought might be useful, when a sudden idea occurred to her. "Blanchie," she said excitedly, "why shouldn't I open my dress shop here? Just think of the models parading down the great staircase—it would be wonderful!" "It certainly would, darling," I remember saying dubiously, "but what would Bovo say?" Mipsie reflected, then dimpled. "We wouldn't tell him," she said. "He is always in Scotland now and hardly ever comes south." At that moment the door opened and a tall, rather handsome girl entered the room.

"Will you please tell me what you are doing here?" asked Mipsie coldly. "I am the Duchess of Briskett." To our astonishment the girl replied "So am I"! It appears that Bovo, in a thoroughly deceitful manner, had married again without a word to his former wife.

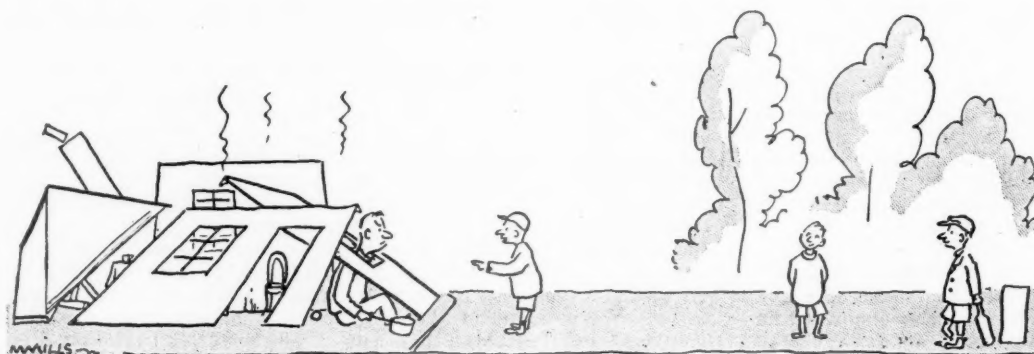
Eventually Mipsie took a shop in Bond Street at a high rent, and also spent a large sum on its redecoration. Next she set about designing the models, and she appeared at Bengers one day laden with bales of lovely material and demanding someone to drape! We tried to persuade Addle—for I was unfortunately too plump—to help the good cause, but even though we allowed him to read his favourite book on pig-keeping while Mipsie pinned chiffon and velvet on him for one whole evening, he did not really enter into the fun somehow. But the second footman, Mipsie discovered, had an excellent figure and was very obliging and patient, besides being so good-looking that Mipsie said his face alone gave her brilliant ideas.

Eventually all her models were ready and Maison Mélisande opened, with instantaneous success. Mipsie was clever enough to realize that with all the first-class Paris firms as competitors she must offer other attractions to clients beyond mere clothes. So the staff included a fortune-teller, a racing tipster, and a private detective whose services were at the disposal of customers with accounts of £1,000 a year or over who were anxious to gain

information about their husbands or friends. Then there were what Mipsie called her "Petites Vignettes." With brilliant psychological insight she realized that every woman loves to see herself as a different type. So for a few guineas a royalty could contemplate herself in the mirror as a midinette, a governess could look at her image dressed as Madame Dubarry, a welfare worker could revel in the feeling that she was Cleopatra. It was astonishing how popular these little "Let's pretend" scenes were. But most successful of all were Maison Mélisande's Dress Parades for Husbands, which were arranged as follows: A customer would perhaps like a dress she had seen on an ordinary day. If she could afford it, well and good, if not she would specify that it should be shown to her husband (at an increased price). This simple scheme pleased both parties. The wives got more clothes and the husbands enjoyed the parades (which were exclusively for men) so greatly that they did not grudge the money for their wife's gown. And gradually Mipsie extended the facilities to include a telephone for every customer, so that a busy man could continue to conduct business in delightful surroundings. But this very consideration for her clients led her to more misfortune.

The switchboard for the various telephones was of course a complicated one. So Mipsie, who never considers herself too grand for any menial job, always insisted on taking over the

operator's work during the Husbands' Dress Parades, so as to be certain that efficient service was given. In this way it was inevitable that she should glean a good deal of City information, which she would have been scarcely human if she had not used to her own advantage. Unluckily, however, a big deal which she made in Ubango Gold shares seemed to upset a certain financier, who was a regular customer of Maison Mélisande's. He dared to accuse my sister of tapping what he considered should have been treated as a private line. The dispute became publicized, which led to the ground landlord of the shop—a strict Methodist—paying a visit of inspection to the establishment. He could not have come on a more unfortunate day. He arrived towards the end of a Husbands' Parade and discovered a Cabinet Minister dancing the tango with one model while a well-known sporting peer was telephoning to his bookmaker, with another model holding the telephone on his knee. His impressions were worsened by several empty champagne bottles—used for local colour, Mipsie said—placed about the show-room. He gave my sister notice on the spot, and when she pointed out the enormous sum she had spent on redecoration, he threatened a public inquiry into the conduct of the shop should she attempt to claim one penny. She was thrown out on Bond Street a pauper—save for £3,000 a year and a small, pathetically small, fortune in Ubangos. M. D.



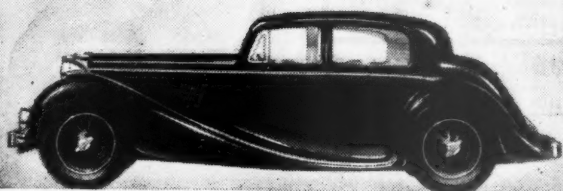
"Could we have our ball, please?"

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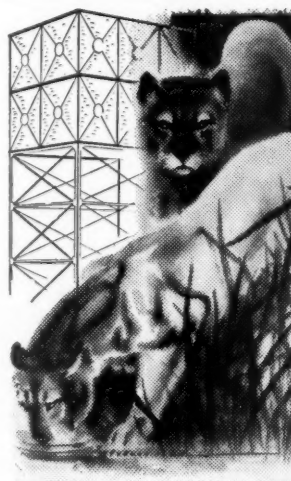
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